DB 15-031

Obtaining a PSS

(02/09/15)

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Obtaining a Public Safety Statement

SFPD Form 544 is a blue, pocket-sized card that provides guidelines for field supervisors in the collection of a Public Safety Statement at the scene of an Officer-Involved Shooting (OIS), In-Custody Death (ICD), or Officer-Involved Discharge (OID).

A Public Safety Statement is information obtained at an officer-involved incident by questioning the officer to determine existing threats to public safety and identify transitory evidence that must be preserved. The scope of this statement is limited only to the collection of such critical, fleeting information in the immediate aftermath of these critical incidents. When conditions permit, the field supervisor should separately obtain Public Safety Statements from each involved officer.

In order to collect such information, the field supervisor may ask the involved officer questions of an exigent nature, including, but not limited:

- Have you been involved in an Officer-Involved Shooting?
- Is anyone injured? Where are they?
- Are there any outstanding suspects? If so, can you provide a description, direction, mode of flight? How long ago did the outstanding suspect(s) flee? What weapons are they armed with?
- Did the suspect(s) fire at you? Where was the suspect? Where were you?
- Where were you when you fired at the suspect? Where was the suspect?
- Did you move during the encounter? From where to where?
- Are you aware of weapons or evidence that needs to be secured or protected?
- Are you aware of any witnesses? Where are they?

Every officer-involved incident is unique, and there may be other appropriate and necessary public safety statement questions that you need to ask that are not listed above or on the SFPD 544 form.

It is *not* the responsibility of the field supervisor to conduct a comprehensive interview of the involved officer. The field supervisor obtaining the public safety statement shall not ask *why* the involved officer reacted to the incident. Criminal investigators assigned to the case shall conduct a complete interview of involved officers, as well as any witness officers, at a later time.

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The field supervisor that obtains a public safety statement should remain on-scene until released by the lead criminal investigator or Lieutenant of the Homicide Detail. This supervisor will brief arriving investigators and should be available to answer questions as they arise. If practical, the supervisor should notify Dispatch that he or she obtained the Public Safety Statement. Once released, the field supervisor shall prepare a statement, attached to the initial incident report, memorializing the public safety statement.

Once a Public Safety Statement has been satisfactorily obtained, the involved officer shall not be asked further questions about the incident until he or she has conferred with his or her representative. Each involved officer should be transported to an SFPD facility and monitored by a designated officer. The field supervisor may need to remind the involved officer not to discuss the incident further until the involved officer has consulted with his or her representative.

GREGORY P. SUHR
Chief of Police

OIS Public Safety Statement Card for Supervisors

- **Supervisors should not ask *why* the involved officer(s) reacted to the incident.** Once the supervisor determines which officer(s) were involved, they should separate them and arrange transport to a Department facility.
- Involved officer(s) should not be prevented from contacting family members to inform them of the situation. However, direct involved officer(s) not to discuss details of the incident until they have legal representation.
- Ensure that C.I.R.T. is notified to respond.
- Absent exigent circumstances, the supervisor should remain at scene to provide answers to the public safety questions to responding investigators.

Public Safety Questions

- Is anyone injured? Where are they?
- Are there any outstanding suspects? If so, what is their description, direction, and mode of travel? How long have they been gone? Were they armed with weapons? What crimes are they wanted for?
- Are you aware of any witnesses and their location?
- In what direction did you or anyone else shoot? With which firearm(s)?
- Can you identify the crime scene and prospective evidence? [Treat as Major Crime Scene.]

Every OIS is unique. There may be other public safety questions you may ask that are not covered above.

SFPD 544 (09/11)